

patient education program

8200 Dodge Street, Omaha, NE 68114 402-955-5400 ChildrensNebraska.org

Sick Day Management

Being sick or having an infection can interfere with diabetes by:

- Making it hard to eat and drink
- Making you tired
- Making blood sugar/glucose more variable
- Making ketones more likely

Paying attention to these things will help you/your child feel better and decrease the chance of a medical emergency.

Insulin	Food	Blood Sugar/Glucose	Ketones
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take long-acting insulin as usual • Take rapid-acting insulin for carbohydrates and to correct for blood sugar/glucose above target 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eat carbohydrates • Eat other foods that sound good • Drink fluids 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test more often • Pay closer attention to sensor information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test often • Take insulin as directed for ketones

Insulin

Illness and infections cause blood sugar to go up because the stress to the body makes your liver release sugar. This sugar is used as fuel to help your body fight off the illness or infection and heal. Your body needs insulin to be able to use this sugar. Since your/your child's body does not make insulin, missing a dose at any time can be dangerous but especially when you are sick.

Food

Illness can make it difficult to eat the food you usually eat, but carbohydrates are still needed for energy. Without carbohydrate the body will break down fat and make ketones worse. The following list, often called a "Sick Day Diet", shows foods that are more easily tolerated. Keep these things in a box in your kitchen so they are easy to get to when you need them. Each serving = 15 grams of carbohydrates.

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Sick Day Diet

Liquid Carbohydrate	Solid Carbohydrate
½ cup fruit juice	¼ cup regular pudding
½ cup regular soda	6 saltines
1 cup Gatorade	1 slice of toast
½ cup regular gelatin	½ cup cooked cereal
1 tablespoon honey	½ banana
1 single popsicle	1/3 cup cooked pasta or rice
½ cup ice cream	½ cup mashed potatoes
¼ cup sherbet	½ cup unsweetened applesauce
1 cup canned soup made with water	

A Word about Fluids

Fluids are very important when you/your child are/is ill. A good goal is for you/your child to drink one ounce per hour for every year of age. For example, a 6-year-old should drink 6 ounces per hour. You will need to decide what kind of fluid to give based on the blood sugar so follow the “Rule of 200” below:

If blood sugar/glucose is below 200 mg/dL	If blood sugar/glucose is 200 mg/dL or above
Give clear, sugared fluids	Give clear, sugar-free fluids

Blood Sugar/Glucose

We already talked about how illness can cause high blood sugars. Low blood sugars can happen too, especially when you/your child are/is vomiting because the body is losing food. Since there can be such a difference, keeping a close eye on the blood sugar/glucose is very important. Having this information will help you know what to do with insulin, food, and fluids.

Ketones

Illness is one of the most common causes of Diabetic Ketoacidosis (DKA). Because of this, ketones need to be monitored anytime someone with diabetes is not feeling well, EVEN IF THE BLOOD SUGAR IS NORMAL. You may need to check your/your child’s ketones each time they use the bathroom.

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When to Call the Clinic

Call the Diabetes Team if any of the following things are happening:

- Vomiting
- Unable to eat or drink
- Having low blood sugars
- Moderate or large ketones
- Signs of dehydration (dry mouth, sunken eyes, no tears, no peeing)
- Signs of DKA (deep and rapid breathing, stomach pain, vomiting)

Remember, the clinic number is answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week,
including holidays for urgent issues.

402-955-3871

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Sick Day Scenarios: What you do when you/your child are/is sick will depend on the type of illness and symptoms. There are 3 common categories of illness:

1. Able to eat as usual: colds, ear infections, wound infections
2. Able to eat a sick day diet: nausea, diarrhea, strep throat
3. Vomiting

Able to eat as usual	Able to eat a sick day diet	Vomiting
Check blood sugar & ketones every 4 hours	Check blood sugar & ketones every 4 hours	Check blood sugar every 1-2 hours
Follow your normal meal plan	Eat carbohydrate foods from the "Sick Day Diet" and other foods as desired	Check ketones each time the bathroom is used
Drink fluids: 1 ounce per age in years per hour	Drink fluids: 1 ounce per age in years per hour	Drink sips of fluids: follow the rule of 200
Are there ketones?	Are there ketones?	Are there ketones?
YES	YES	YES or NO
Call the Diabetes Team BEFORE giving insulin	Call the Diabetes Team BEFORE giving insulin	Call the Diabetes Team BEFORE giving insulin
Communicate with the Diabetes Team every 2-3 hours	Communicate with the Diabetes Team every 2-3 hours	Communicate with the Diabetes Team every 2-3 hours
NO	NO	
Continue the diabetes treatment plan	Calculate the meal insulin dose based on the insulin to carb ratio and correction	
Communicate with Diabetes Team in several days if blood sugars stay high	Communicate with the Diabetes Team every 2-3 hours as needed	